reusable and environment friendly safety measures. However, paper mills adopting recycling and using non-conventional raw materials are entitled to concessional excise and customs duty. Paper and Paper-board produced by using more than 75% non-conventional raw material has been exempted from payment of excise duty upto first clearance of 3500 M.T. per annum. Import of waste paper by paper mills is also allowed at a concessional rate of 5% basic customs duty.

Price stabilisation fund for plantation sector

1101. SHRI K. B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up a high level Committee to look into the creation of a Price Stabilisation Fund for the plantation sector;

(b) if so, whether the Committee has submitted its report to the Government; and

(c) if so, the recommendations of the Committee and the status of implementation thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) On the basis of the recommendations of the Committee the Government has approved the setting up of a Price Stabilisation Fund for the benefit of the growers of tea, coffee, rubber and tobacco.

Anti-dumping proceedings of USA against Indian Steel

1102. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question 1649 given in the Rajya Sabha on 19th March, 2002 and state:

(a) the steps Government have taken against anti-dumping proceedings of USA against Indian Steel; and

(b) the results achieved, so far, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) and (b) The initiation of anti-dumping investigation is against the pricing factor relating to the

subject products which is primarily concerning the company or companies of the exporting country. However, in the anti-dumping investigation initiated by USA against import of cut-to-length carbon steel plates, at India's request a panel was established under the Dispute Settlement Mechanism of the WTO for examining India's claims in the dispute relating to imposition of dumping duty to the extent of 72.49% by the US. Subsequent to the directions of the Dispute Settlement Body of WTO, the US authorities have revised the dumping duty and reduced it to 42.39%.

In the cold rolled steel products case, the US International Trade Commission issued its final determination on August 25, 2002 in respect of India and four other countries, and ruled that there was no evidence to support the charges that dumping was taking place and had resulted in injury to the US steel producers.

ASEAN-India Eco Task Force

1103. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of ASEAN-India Eco Task Force proposed to be set-up;

(b) the terms and references of this Task Force; and

(c) by when, this Task Force is likely to submit its recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) In the first ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM)-India Consultation which was held in Brunei Darussalam 15th September 2002, the Ministers agreed to establish ASEAN-India Economic Linkages Task Force (AIELTF). The AIELTF is co-chaired by India and Malaysia. Each ASEAN country and India have nominated their representatives to the AIELTF, including representative(s) of the private sector.

(b) and (c) The AIELTF has to prepare a draft Framework Agreement to enhance ASEAN-India Economic co-operation by adopting a building block approach, for submission to the next meeting of ASEAN-India Economic Ministers at Phnom Penh in October 2003.